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ABSTRACT

From January, 1997 to July, 1998, the California Community College System has been developing a strategy to enable community colleges to make a significant difference in the social and economic success of the state. The Board of Governors has conducted special study sessions on the work of the California Higher Education Policy Center, the RAND Corporation, the California Postsecondary Education Commission, the Commission on Innovation, the Citizen's Commission for Higher Education, the California State University, and the University of California. In addition, the board and the chancellor created a task force to document problems and develop an overall strategy for dealing with this challenge. Completed in September of 1997, the task force report serves as the primary basis for the strategic responses outlined in this document. Included are three sections: (1) major findings, which describe reduced college access and resources, increased capital outlay, and fallen participation rate; (2) a strategic response for the system of community colleges; and (3) a strategic response for the state. (AS)

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2005

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*A Strategic Response for
Enabling Community Colleges to
Make a Defining Difference in the
Social and Economic Success of
California in the 21st Century*

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California Community Colleges 2005

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July 1998

**Board of Governors
California Community Colleges**

As California enters the 21st century, higher education faces an increased enrollment demand of between 450,000 and

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600,000 students, most of whom will be served by the community colleges. Assuming even the best of economic conditions, the State will not have sufficient revenues to fund the quality programs and services necessary to serve these additional students. Indeed, for community colleges, the experience of the past two decades has been not only a significant reduction in the levels of access to higher education, but also a significant reduction in the relative levels of funding for each student.

Recognizing that the California Community Colleges have played and will continue to play an increasingly important role in the social and economic success of the State, there is a compelling need to restore access to quality postsecondary education and workforce preparation opportunity. Community colleges not only hold the key to success for millions of our citizens, but also the key to a workforce prepared to compete in a global economy, and the key to an educated citizenry that serves as the stable basis for a strong multicultural democracy. Given resource limitations and the magnitude of the gaps in access and funding, a strategic response is needed that will enable the State, the community colleges, and the students and their families to share in the responsibility for opening up additional and improved postsecondary education opportunities.

For the past fifteen months, the system has been engaged in developing a strategic response for enabling the community colleges to make a defining difference in the social and economic success of the State. The Board of Governors has conducted special study sessions on the work of the California Higher Education Policy Center, the RAND Corporation, the California Postsecondary Education Commission, the Commission on Innovation, the Citizen's Commission for Higher Education, the California State University and the University of California. In addition, the Board and the Chancellor created a task force within the Consultation process to document the problems and develop an overall strategy for dealing with the challenge. Completed in September of 1997, the task force report serves as the primary basis for the strategic response outlined in this statement.

The strategic response being recommended is organized under three headings. *Part One* identifies the major findings from the work of Consultation and the Chancellor's staff. *Part Two* identifies what the California Community Colleges should do as the system's commitment to the strategic response; and *Part Three* identifies what the State should do as its commitment to the strategic response.

I. Major Findings

1. The California Community Colleges have been constrained by State funding and policy decisions to significantly reduce access over the past two decades. The participation rate (number of students per 1,000 adults) fell from a high of 88 students per 1,000 adults in 1975, to a rate of 57.5 students per 1,000 adults in 1995. The current rate is approximately 60 students per 1,000 adults.
2. Participation rates have tended to climb during periods of sustained economic growth, primarily because the colleges have been funded more adequately during such times. Similarly, rates have decreased during periods of recession and at times when student fees are increased.
3. Given the changing workforce needs of the State, the changing economy and society, and sheer demographics, the need for access to programs and services within the mission of the community colleges will be substantially greater in the 21st century. In addition to the *Tidal Wave II* of more than 450,000 students, increased access is also needed to meet the demands of training a world class workforce with higher levels of skill and education, to accommodate the reduction in remedial offerings by the California State University and the University of California, and to provide training and education to enable welfare recipients to move off of welfare and into family supporting jobs. To provide a reasonable level of access in the 21st century, the report of the 2005 Task Force documents that the colleges should be serving approximately 78 out of 1,000 California adults by 2005.
4. At the same time that California Community Colleges have been constrained to reduce levels of access, they have also been constrained to operate on less relative revenue per student, and have fallen further and further behind the national average in funding per student for community colleges. Between 1977 and 1995, California Community Colleges lost 6.2 percent in overall purchasing power. As of 1994, the colleges were spending \$3,554 per student while the national average was \$6,022 per student. This \$2,500 disparity in funding per student continues to the present day.

5. Overall, the community colleges have heroically managed with reduced resources, making cuts in virtually every area of the budget, and operating substantially below national averages in virtually every area of the budget. To enable higher quality programs and services, and to enable improved outcomes, will require an additional infusion of resources per student. As a reasonable goal for 2005, the funding per student for the California Community Colleges should be within \$1,500 per student of the national average. Given predicted inflation rates, this means that funding per student should be approximately \$6,500, with the national average projected to be approximately \$8,000 per student.
6. Assuming the currently strong economic conditions continue without a downturn until 2005, and assuming the community colleges receive a 10.6 percent share of Proposition 98 revenues, the State will still not have nearly enough revenue to enable California Community Colleges to increase the level of access to 78 out of 1,000 adults, with funding at \$6,500 per full-time student.
7. In terms of capital outlay, the California Community Colleges currently have a backlog of \$4 billion in approved projects for which funding is not available. For 1998-99, another \$1 billion in capital outlay funding is being requested by the individual colleges. Given the similar capital outlay needs of the other public education segments, the State alone cannot carry the level of bonded indebtedness necessary to provide such funding.
8. Absent a long-term fiscal plan and an agreed-upon strategic response to be applied over a number of years, the State will not provide for the level of access to education and training that will ensure the social and economic success of the State in the 21st century. Needed improvements in the quality of programs and services will not be possible, and California will risk social and economic dysfunction.

The California Community Colleges will, to the full limits of all available funding, provide postsecondary access to quality pro-

grams and services for all eligible students seeking admission. The colleges will play a major role in enabling the State to meet its workforce preparation needs, and will otherwise ensure that every qualified student with the capacity and motivation to benefit from programs within the mission will have a place, and will not be shut out by economic or social disadvantage.

To achieve this overall commitment, the California Community Colleges will carry out a number of improvements and reforms, many of which are already being implemented, including:

1. The colleges will change academic calendars in length and internal structure to maximize existing physical plant capacity and best fit student learning needs. The colleges will also continue to expand their operations to a greater portion of the calendar year, increasing from a system average of 271 days of instruction per year in 1996-97, toward a goal of maximum use of the colleges' plant capacity.
2. The colleges will improve articulation with high schools, among community colleges, and with universities to ensure that no time is lost in transition between institutions and to shorten the length of time necessary to complete baccalaureate degree programs. At the system level, the California Community Colleges will enter into memorandums of understanding with the University of California, the California State University, and the independent colleges in order to increase the number of students transferring and enable more seamless processes. In addition, the system will develop a single common numbering system for all or a subset of courses, including an implementation strategy.
3. The colleges will expand appropriate use of technology in providing support services, performing administrative functions, and in

II. Strategic Response: What the System of Community Colleges Must Do

delivering instruction to achieve optimum use of existing physical plant and in best meeting the learning needs of students. At the system level, the California Community Colleges will develop a *Technology Plan II* by January of 1999 and will cooperatively work with the other education segments and the State on the development of the California Virtual University.

4. The system will fully implement the matriculation process to ensure that scarce learning resources are used in a manner that maximizes students' retention and progress toward their educational goals.
5. The colleges will continue to expand methods of instruction by providing alternative delivery systems and pedagogical techniques (e.g., collaborative and relational learning) to ensure that appropriate teaching styles are matched with different learning styles so that retention and learning are maximized.
6. At the system level, the Board of Governors and Chancellor's Office will increase interagency cooperation (e.g., with the State Employment Development Department, the Trade and Commerce Agency, the Department of General Services, etc.) to make maximum use of State resources.
7. The colleges will explore new ways of managing existing facilities (e.g., utilities management systems); and will explore, in urban and suburban settings, the greater use of single structure educational centers as an alternative to building whole new campuses.
8. As the resource demands to meet increased access and the costs of quality operation are met, the California Community Colleges will produce improved outcomes. The system will establish and make meaningful progress on systemwide goals for 2005 established by the Board of Governors. The goals will be derived from the mission of the community colleges.
9. The Board of Governors will recommend to the Governor and the Legislature a reformed *Education Code* as it pertains to community colleges, thereby enabling the colleges to operate more efficiently and accountably in the 21st century.

10. At the systemwide level, the Board of Governors and Chancellor's Office will provide more value-added services for the colleges, including cooperative purchasing of computers, telecommunications and technology equipment, and other items.
11. The California Community Colleges will develop a system Human Resources Plan by January of 1999. Among key components will be the number of staff needed by the year 2005 (projections given enrollment growth, retirements, etc.); plans for securing staff; and methods for hiring faculty for a growing number of courses and programs which are rapidly changing in terms of demand, and funded from external sources. The system will set a goal for increasing the number of full-time instructors, as well as other enhancements to assure quality of instruction provided by part-time instructors. The plan will also include components to assure the system meets its continuing commitment to staff diversity.
12. The system will increase the number of public-private or public-public partnerships in a way which involves financial contributions by more of the private sector or other public agencies when the educational training programs directly benefit them. In particular, the system will expand its efforts for economic development and workforce preparation by substantially expanding the total dollar volume of public-private and public-public partnerships and by considering ways the State could support aspects of workforce preparation and economic development of direct benefit to students and the State. The system will begin to measure the numbers of students educated through public-private or public-public partnerships, education, and establish goals for the year 2005.
13. The system will develop recommendations to change federal statutes and regulations so that California receives its fair share of federal revenues and is not continually penalized for maintaining low student fees.
14. In providing access to quality programs and services for all eligible students seeking admission, the system will strive to provide access on an equitable basis, thereby enabling participation of traditionally underserved populations.

If California Community Colleges are to deliver on the foregoing commitments and make a

major contribution to the social and economic success of California, the State must commit to do the following:

III. Strategic Response: What the State Must Do

1. In terms of access, the State should commit to fund enrollment growth (FTES) at 4 percent per year until 2005, and thereafter at a rate to be determined by future policy. The State should commit to funding enrollment growth for regular programs (excluding public-private and public-public partnerships) to enable a participation rate of at least 73/1000 adults by 2005.
2. In terms of maintaining and improving the quality of programs and services, the State should fund annual cost of living changes to prevent an erosion in quality, and should provide an additional two to three percent increase in funds per year to enable improvements in quality and improved performance by the system. Continued funding for improved performance would be dependent on the system making progress on the established goals.
3. To enable student access, the State should enact and adhere to a long-term student fee policy that provides a graduate and moderate fee adjustment. The State should enable the additional revenue to stay within the system to enable the State to meet its funding commitments that are part of this strategic response.
4. In terms of a total revenue commitment, the State should commit to provide the California Community Colleges with an average increase of 10 percent per year over the period of a decade (1996-2005). This level of reinvestment will enable most of the access and quality improvement goals to be met. At the same time, even with this substantial level of investment, the California Community Colleges will still be operating at more than \$1,500 per student below the national average for community colleges. In the event

that current and proposed sources of revenue are inadequate during any given year, the State should enact such revenue enhancements as necessary to meet the revenue commitment.

5. In terms of capital outlay, the State should provide at least \$500 million per year for the California Community Colleges in State capital outlay bonds. The State should also place a Constitutional amendment on the ballot to allow majority vote local capital outlay bonds.
6. Acting upon recommendations of the system, the State should enact a reformed *Education Code* as it pertains to community colleges.



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